

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----250951 040547 /10
O 250743Z FEB 77 ZFF-4
FM AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4168

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 DAR ES SALAAM 0828

NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY SCHAUFLE ONLY

E.O. 11652: XGDS FOREVER
TAGS: PFOR, TZ, KY, UG
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT NYERERE COMMENTS ON SITUATION IN UGANDA

1. SUMMARY. PRESIDENT NYERERE SUGGESTS THAT US MIGHT WISH
BE SYMPATHETIC TO EFFORT OVERTHROW AMIN REGIME IN UGANDA,
SPECIFICALLY BY GETTING KENYA TO CUT OFF OIL SUPPLIES AGAIN. I AM
UNENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT IDEA. END SUMMARY.

2. PRESIDENT NYERERE ASKED ME TO SEE HIM AT HIS HOME AT MSASANI
BEACH EVENING OF FEBRUARY 24. HE WAS ALONE. HE SAID HE WANTED
"TO GOSSIP" A BIT ABOUT UGANDA.

3. NYERERE REVIEWED HISTORY OF AMIN REGIME, INDICATING INTER
ALIA THAT:

(A) FORMER UK PRIME MINISTER HEATH HAD AT LEAST TACITLY
SUPPORTED AMIN COUP BECAUSE NYERERE, KAUNDA, AND OBOTE HAD
OPPOSED AND EMBARRASSED HEATH AT SINGAPORE COMMONWEALTH
PRIME MINISTERS' CONFERENCE OVER BRITISH ARMS SALES TO SOUTH
AFRICA,

(B) IF HEATH, CONTRARY TO HIS AMBASSADORS' RECOMMENDATIONS,
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HAD NOT RECOGNIZED AMIN ALMOST IMMEDIATELY, NYERERE AND OTHER
AFRICANS COULD HAVE UNDONE COUP,

(C) WHEN KENYA CUT OFF OIL SUPPLIES TO UGANDA IN 1976, AMIN
WAS ON THE VERGE OF FALLING,

(D) ELEMENTS CAPABLE OF TURNING AMIN OUT STILL EXIST WITHIN

UGANDA.

4. NYERERE THEN DISCUSSED AMIN'S KILLINGS AND ASKED HOW MUCH LONGER THEY MUST BE ALLOWED TO GO ON. THE BRITISH AND ISRAELIS NO LONGER SUPPORT HIM. THE WHOLE WORLD WOULD NOW LIKE TO SEE THE FELLOW OUT. KENYA HOLDS THE KEY. IF IT CUT OFF OIL SUPPLIES AGAIN, UGANDANS WOULD SOON TURN AMIN OUT. UNFORTUNATELY, NYERERE IS NOT SURE TO WHAT DEGREE KENYATTA IS DIRECTING THINGS IN KENYA THESE DAYS, AND, ANYWAY, IN VIEW OF PRESENT TANZANIA-KENYA DIFFICULTIES, NYERERE CAN'T SPEAK TO KENYA ON SUBJECT LIKE THIS. BUT SOMEONE MUST. "AND, SURELY, A WHISPER TO THE OIL COMPANIES THEMSELVES IS NOT IMPOSSIBLE?" THE TIME IS REIPE.

5. WHEN I DID NOT RESPOND IMMEDIATELY UPON COMPLETION OF NYERERE'S PRESENTATION, HE SAID, "WHY SO SERIOUS, MR. AMBASSADOR? WE ARE JUST GOSSIPING. BUT WHAT DO YOU THINK?"

6. I KEPT MY REMARKS TO AN IMPLICITLY NEGATIVE MINIMUM, SAYING THAT, AS NYERERE KNEW, US WAS CONCERNED WITH HUMAN RIGHTS EVERYWHERE AND STRONGLY DEPLORED THEIR VIOLATION IN UGANDA. HOWEVER, INTERFERENCE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF COUNTRIES, UNLESS AT LEAST ENDORSED BY UN, ALWAYS BOTHERED ME. THIS APPROACH HAD BEEN TRIED BY VARIOUS NATIONS IN THE PAST, SOMETIMES WITH THE HIGHEST MORAL MOTIVES, BUT OFTEN THINGS DID NOT TURN OUT AS INTENDED. PUBLIC CONDEMNATION AND DIPLOMATIC PROTEST WERE ONE THING. SECRET MANEUVERING AND UNILATERAL ECONOMIC WARFARE WERE ANOTHER. AND, WHATEVER MIGHT BE SAID ABOUT GOVERNMENTS' EXERTING PRESSURE, I DIDN'T THINK THAT PRIVATE COMPANIES SHOULD GET INVOLVED IN THAT SORT OF THING. I APPRECIATED
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THE CONFIDENCE THE PRESIDENT HAD SHOWN BY "GOSSIPING" IN THE WAY HE HAD AND WOULD RESPECT HIS TRUST MOST CAREFULLY. IF I COULD THINK OF ANYTHING TO ADD, I WOULD LET HIM KNOW.

7. COMMENT: AS TO WHAT NYERERE IS UP TO WITH THIS PITCH, I THINK HIS MAIN AIM IS TO GET US TO SUGGEST TO NAIROBI THAT KENYA SHOULD REIMPOSE AN OIL BLOCKADE WITH THE AIM OF PRECIPITATING AN OVERTHROW OF AMIN. NYERERE WOULD PROBABLY BE SUSCEPTIBLE ALSO TO ANY COUNTER SUGGESTIONS WE MIGHT WISH TO MAKE FOR ACTION AGAINST AMIN. HE IS FLYING A KITE, ALBEIT A RELATIVELY SINCERE ONE.

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 DAR ES SALAAM 0828

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8. AS TO WHAT WE SHOULD DO ABOUT THIS KITE, I THINK IT HAS BEEN EVIDENT IN REPORTING ON MY DEALINGS WITH NYERERE DURING THE FOURTEEN MONTHS THAT I HAVE BEEN HERE THAT I HAVE A GOOD DEAL OF RESPECT FOR THE MAN, AND, DESPITE HIS OCCASIONAL ERRATIC WORDS AND ACTIONS, FOR THE CONSISTENCY OF HIS MORAL PRINCIPLES. I ALSO BELIEVE THAT ALTHOUGH, LIKE ANY OTHER SKILLED POLITICAL LEADER, HE WANTS TO GET THE MOST HE CAN OUT OF THE RELATIONSHIP FOR HIS OWN PURPOSES, HIS CONFIDENCE AND SYMPATHY FOR THE US HAS GENUINELY INCREASED SHARPLY IN THE RECENT PAST. AND, THE PRESENT SITUATION IN UGANDA IS CERTAINLY STINKING-RIPE.

9. NEVERTHELESS, I AM NOT VERY SYMPATHETIC TO NYERERE'S PRESENT PROPOSAL.

(A) IN PRINCIPLE, I DO NOT LIKE THE IDEA OF THE US BECOMING INVOLVED, EVEN IF ONLY IN TERMS OF AVUNCULAR ADVICE, IN ACTIVITIES AIMED AT CHANGING GOVERNMENTS -- ESPECIALLY IN THIS PERIPHERAL PART OF THE WORLD WHERE NO CRITICAL NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS ARE AT STAKE.

(B) SECONDLY, I AM INCLINED TO THINK THAT THERE IS SUFFICIENT HEAT IN UGANDA THAT AMIN'S POT MAY BOIL OVER SOME DAY FAIRLY SOON WITHOUT EXTRANEIOUS STIRRING.

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(C) THIRDLY, IT IS VIRTUALLY CERTAIN THAT NYERERE STILL CHERISHES HOPES THAT A TURNOVER IN UGANDA WILL BRING OBOTE BACK TO POWER, A PROSPECT THAT WOULD BE RECOGNIZED BY KENYA AND NOT LIKELY TO FIND FAVOR WITH IT.

(D) FOURTHLY, FOR US TO GET INVOLVED IN SOMETHING LIKE THIS

WITH KENYA COULD LEAD US DEEPER INTO A KIND OF SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH NAIROBI WHICH NYERERE HIMSELF WOULD HOLD AGAINST US.

(E) FINALLY, IT SEEMS TO ME THAT NYERERE IS PUSHING HIS NEW "SYMPATICO" WITH THE US A BIT HARD IN THIS CASE AND NOT ALONG VERY CONSTRUCTIVE LINES, A TENDENCY WHICH WE SHOULD NOT ENCOURAGE.

10. THE DOOR IS STILL OPEN IF WE WANT TO RESPOND, BUT, UNLESS WASHINGTON SEES SOMETHING IN THE SITUATION WHICH I HAVE MISSED, MY RECOMMENDATION IS TO LET THIS ONE DIE WITHOUT FURTHER WORD OR ACTION OTHER THAN TO KEEP NYERERE CURRENT ON OUR OFFICIAL POSITION ON UGANDA, E.G., STATE 42220 (WHICH WAS RECEIVED HERE AFTER MY MEETING WITH NYERERE). IF, AS INDICATED IN RECENT CABLES FROM THE DEPARTMENT, WE WILL SOON BE MOVING ON NYERERE'S REQUEST FOR AN EXPRESSION TO PRESIDENT KENYATTA OF INTEREST IN THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY AND ON NYERERE'S PET PROJECT OF A NAMIBIA CONFERENCE, I BELIEVE NYERERE'S ATTENTION CAN BE FOCUSED ON THESE QUESTIONS AND THAT WE NEED NOT FEAR ANY SIGNIFICANT DAMAGE TO OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM AS A RESULT OF OUR PASSING ON THIS PARTICULAR ISSUE.
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